for preparation of DPR is in progress. Construction of Rail Over Bridges (ROBs) in replacement of these rail crossings have been suggested by the Consultants in the Inception Report. It is premature to indicate plan/ time frame for construction of ROBs at this stage.

Four laning of roads in Assam

1893. SHRI SILVIUS CONDPAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) by when the four-lane road construction work from Baihata Charalai to Tezpur would start in Assam;

(b) whether there is any proposal to construct a road bridge over Brahmaputra river and if so, by when the construction work would start;

(c) the present position of utilizing Brahmaputra river as waterways linking with Bay of Bengal for facilitating inland water transport facilities to promote trade and commerce towards North-Eastern Region;

(d) whether it is a fact that Government are going to wind up the establishment of Central Inland Waterways Corporation in North-Eastern Region; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) Four laning of Baihata Charalai to Tezpur Section of NH-52 covering a length of 130 km has been identified under NHDP Phase III-B. The feasibility study and preparation of Detailed Project Report is in progress.

(b) The construction of new Bridge over Brahmaputra river has been taken up on East West Corridor under NHDP Phase-II. The contractor has already been mobilized at the site.

(c) Dhubri to Sadiya stretch of River Brahmaputra has been declared as National Waterway and is being developed by Inland Waterways Authority of India. North East Region is connected to Bay of Bengal through this National Waterway and River in Bangladesh. During the year 2005-06, cargo movement on this National Waterway has been 0.0322 billion ton km.

(d) There is no proposal for winding up of the establishment of Central Inland Water Transport Corporation in North East region. However, Government has decided to disinvest the Corporation in favour of private parties.

(e) Does not arise.

National Waterway (NW-IV)

1894. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal before Government for taking up a National Waterway (NW-IV) from Bhadrachalam (Rajahmundry, Vijaywada, Chennai) to Puducherry and the details thereof;

(b) the views expressed by Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry Governments regarding this project; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Inland Waterways of NW-I and NW-II are not economically viable?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) Government has introduced a Bill in the Lok Sabha on 8.12.2006 to declare Kakinada-Pondicherry stretch of canals consisting of Kakinada canal, Eluru canal, Commamur canal, Buckingham canal and Kaluvelly tank alongwith Bhadrachalam—Rajahmundry stretch of River Godavari and Wazirabad—Vijayawada stretch of River Krishna (1095 km) as a National Waterway. The Bill stands referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture for examination. The total estimated cost of development of proposed National Waterway is Rs. 542 crore (at 2002 prices) and a time period of approximately 5 years is needed to complete the projects after declaration of the waterway as a National Waterway.

Government of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have conveyed their acceptance to the participation in the project and are interacting with Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) on various issues related to the proposed development of this waterway.

According to the techno-economic studies for National Waterway No. 1 & 2, the waterways are economically viable if developed with adequate